



Clark County Health Department Fact Sheet

Septic Systems After a Flood or Power Outage

For systems using pumps

Disconnect the system's pump from its power source.

After a flood

- Septic systems that have been flooded should be used as little as possible because the drain field will not work effectively until waters have receded.
- After waters have receded, correct any problems before using the system.
- Inspect the chambers of a pump system, and pump if needed, prior to using the system.

After a power outage

- Reduce the water use to minimum, especially if the system has a pump. If the reserve storage inside the chamber is full, the waste pipes in your home can back up.
- Turn off the pump at the control panel.
- After power is restored and waters have receded from the drain field area, switch the pump on and let it run for five minutes maximum, then turn it off. Repeat this manual switching every eight hours until the effluent drops to the "OFF" level and the pump turns off by itself. If only a small amount of water was used, the pump may turn off during the first switching.

Warning!

If the power outage caused the pump to malfunction, do not enter the pump chamber. Gases inside the pump chambers are toxic and lack of oxygen can be fatal. If you cannot locate the problem, call a certified septic system installer for services and repairs. Their phone numbers are located in the phone book under "Septic."

Caution: always turn off the power supply at the circuit breaker and unplug all power cords before handling the pumps or floats.

For more information, call the Clark County Health Department (360) 397-8428.